



Connecticut Department of Transportation

Meeting Minutes

**Project Advisory Committee Introductory Meeting
Project No. 158-214
Bridge 01349 (William F. Cribari Memorial Bridge)
Route 136 (Bridge Street) over the Saugatuck River
Town of Westport**

**Wednesday, July 18, 2018, 6:30 p.m.
Town Hall Auditorium
110 Myrtle Avenue
Westport, Connecticut**

Present:

See attached Sign-in Sheets.

Presentation:

The meeting began at approximately 6:40 p.m. with a presentation by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (Department) regarding the forming of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC), and the purpose and role the PAC would have in the development of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE). The presentation was given by Mr. Theodore Nezames, Ms. Priti Bhardwaj, and Mr. Mark McMillan of the Department; and Ms. Stephanie Brooks of Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. (FHI), a consulting firm hired to head the public involvement process for development of the EA/EIE. Mr. Arnold Bloch, of FHI, facilitated the meeting.

The presentation consisted mainly of an overview of the project and the PAC's objectives, roles, and future steps. The overview included the purpose and need for the project; the Department's findings with regards to the existing conditions of the bridge; and a way forward with stakeholder involvement.

The Department explained that it is currently developing the EA/EIE as part of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and Connecticut Environmental

Protection Act (CEPA), which will determine the cultural/historic, socio-economic and natural/environmental impacts of various design alternatives. The purpose of the EA/EIE is to explore options that accommodate safe vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and marine travel; are resilient to the changing shoreline climate and environmental conditions; and consider the historic character of the bridge.

The Department explained that the development of the EA/EIE requires a review from several different perspectives to ensure all impacts are properly evaluated so that the best possible solution can be reached. The Department is creating a PAC as part of the public outreach to obtain critical input in arriving at that solution. The PAC is being formed to assist the Department in its decision-making process. Its role will be to provide critical input to be considered in this process. The PAC will serve as one of many forums the Department will be using to gather as much information as possible to be analyzed within the EA/EIE.

The Department asked that each of the organizations invited to the PAC to name one representative to attend the meetings if they wish to be included in the PAC, and that they bring input from their groups and inform them of the PAC discussions. Because this meeting is to serve as an introduction to the PAC, it is understood that each of the entities to be represented may not yet have chosen their representative. It was requested that each group notify the Department of who their representative on the PAC will be by August 15, 2018 so that the Department can coordinate the next PAC meeting. Also, as other stakeholder groups are identified or submitted for consideration, they can be brought into the PAC.

Attendees were reminded that if they are not members of the PAC, they may still be involved in the EA/EIE process by participating in several other public outreach opportunities provided during the EA/EIE process. Anyone with questions may contact the Department or view information available on the Department website.

Upon the completion of the presentation, the meeting was then opened up for questions related to the development of the PAC.

Public Comments and Questions (with Department responses in italics):

First Selectman James Marpe mentioned the Town's appreciation for the development of the PAC and the issues the community faces involving the bridge and the project; He asked that the Department be inclusive and provide a "big tent" in terms of representation on the PAC, noting that the historic resources are important to the community, as is safety. He noted the level of disruption opening the bridge causes to the traffic in the surrounding area. The Town of Westport is aware that repair work will be occurring in the near future to strengthen damaged sections of the ornamental truss. Based on discussions between the Town and Department, work will be performed during nighttime hours to avoid severe impacts to commuters and other users of the bridge during the day. Overnight work would be safer and should allow for construction to be completed

quicker than if work were performed during the day. Additional clarification regarding what the project involved was requested.

The repair work for the trusses will be undertaken to address impact damage and deterioration of the trusses. While it is noted that the trusses do not support traffic loads along the bridge, they are self-supporting, and need to support loads applied to them, such as their own weight and wind. The repairs would be performed by the Department's Bridge Maintenance Unit during nighttime hours. Repair work would include methods for strengthening the truss members, including installation of plates over damaged sections. It is noted that the work will not involve removal of any truss members, or installing additional members.

Some attendees complained about the Department's use of terms such as "functionally obsolete" and "intolerable bridge geometry" in describing the bridge. They felt these terms condition future discussions about solutions and steer the project into replacement of the bridge.

The Department's use of these engineering terms is done to describe the bridge in comparison to today's standards but the terms do not determine the best solution for the project. The terminology shown in the presentation is taken from official guidelines for classification from the Federal Highway Administration's national bridge inspection guidelines for recording inspection findings by Department bridge inspectors. These terms and their meanings will be topics of discussion for understanding of their meaning at future PAC meetings.

Some attendees asked how the EA was being funded after the project was removed from the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Also, questions were raised regarding the "shelf life" of the EA and what it means for the project once the EA is complete. Would the funding for the project consist of 20% State share after completion of the EA? Would the Town be required to contribute towards the funding of the project?

The "shelf life" of the EA is approximately 2-3 years, after which, a re-evaluation would be required to determine any changes in the surrounding environments. Once the EA is complete, a recommendation would be made to determine the alternative that best serves the purpose and need while having the least impacts on all environmental aspects. The Department would proceed to request funding for the project once the EA is complete. Clarification was made that funds for projects in the TIP are not actual funds, but are placeholders in a five-year constrained Capital Plan. In order to be fiscally responsible, the State requested a placeholder based on the highest estimate. This was not an indication that the highest cost alternative was selected, only that there would be funds budgeted for all of the alternatives being considered. The State would be responsible for 20 percent of the costs for the project, supplemented by 80 percent federal funding, while the Town of Westport would not be responsible for any funding for the project.

Several PAC-related questions were brought up by attendees including: "How can a person become a member of the PAC?"; "Is a certain organization represented in the

PAC?"; "Where can people find out what groups and representatives are included in the PAC?" and "Where can I find information regarding the PAC if I am not a member?"

Any requests to be included in the PAC should be sent directly to the Department for consideration. Contact information at the Department was provided during the presentation. A list of PAC organizations and members will be made available on the project website. Information regarding the PAC meetings: topics of discussion, presentations, and meeting minutes will be available on the website as they are developed. Additional questions or requests involving the PAC should also be sent to the Department.

What are the future meeting dates for the PAC meetings?

Exact dates for the future PAC meetings have not yet been determined; however, the intent is for the first meeting to be held in early fall, 2018. Organizations are asked to notify the Department of the representative they plan to send as a member of the PAC by August 15, 2018, so that an official list of members can be available by Labor Day. Additional meetings will be held over the course of the next year, and a total of 3-4 meetings are anticipated; however, additional meetings can be held as deemed necessary.

The PAC Introductory meeting was referenced by some as simply repeating information that had already been presented at the past meetings held for the project. Some questioned if opinions expressed prior to the PAC were still being considered.

The Department is aware of opinions expressed at previous meetings and consideration will be given to them. The PAC is not a clean slate for obtaining opinions, but a forum for gathering additional information as to how different alternatives will affect the surrounding environments. The Department wants to ensure as much information is gathered and evaluated within the EA/EIE so that the best possible solution can be determined.

Some agreed the PAC is necessary in the development of the project. There are several concerns by many regarding multiple issues, such as the concern of truck traffic moving across the bridge, but also the difficulty for local vehicles, such as emergency services, crossing the existing structure. The representatives look forward to discussing and understanding all the possible alternates through the PAC.

The comment was noted.

There were a number of comments and questions regarding the recently announced repairs that are scheduled for the bridge. Individuals had concerns for possible noise and lights bothering nearby neighbors, as well as the hours of operations.

Specifics were not available but the concerns will be discussed with the Department's unit scheduling maintenance work.

A resident expressed concern regarding one of the slides shown in the slideshow after the official presentation slides, which depicted a shape showing Department land encroaching onto his property.

The graphic in question was part of a series of slides showing potential environmental impacts and abutting properties. These slides were included after the official PowerPoint presentation to be used as quick references to help answer questions from attendees. The slide of concern to the attendee was a depiction of the properties and owners closest to the bridge. However, the slide was erroneous, as each of the shapes outlining the immediate properties surrounding the bridge were accidentally shifted to the right along the map overlay, causing state property on the northeast corner of the bridge to appear on the adjacent private residence. The Department apologized for the error and any confusion caused.

Concerns were raised regarding how the impending repairs to the truss would impact the historic integrity of the bridge.

The upcoming work is considered temporary repair work. Namely, it will maintain the existing structure until such a time that a solution is selected for the project. It is work that can be performed to fix the truss without requiring that the truss be removed and repaired off-site. The proposed work neither involves the removal of existing elements nor the addition of new members to the trusses. Methods for strengthening the truss, such as installation of plates, will be limited to the damaged sections of the truss.

Several attendees questioned the reason for the organization of the PAC, wondering what it's ultimate purpose would be, what the Department is looking to get from the PAC, and in what way the PAC will influence the decision for the project.

Part of the NEPA/CEPA process is the identification and analysis of alternatives. The PAC will provide input about alternatives and help evaluate how each alternative may affect each environment. The Department is searching for input from each of the interest groups represented in the PAC. The Department wants to hear many voices and identify potential impacts and benefits that the alternatives present, and the PAC will help in the accumulation of this information.

Is refurbishment of the existing bridge still an alternative under review?

Yes, refurbishment is an alternative that will be reviewed in the development of the EA/EIE.

A resident questioned the possibility of a new bridge restricting access to large vehicles.

Rehabilitation alternatives may result in maintaining the existing vertical clearance. However, for all new structure options, the Department must provide a structure that can best accommodate users of the facility and carry legal loads.

Is the Section 106 process underway, and how will it interact with the PAC?

The Section 106 process specifically considers the historic impacts of the project. The PAC includes the Section 106 Consulting Parties, as the historic aspects are one of the impacts being looked at in the EA/EIE. Therefore, there will be some overlap; however, the processes are distinct.

Several questions were asked regarding what the decision of the Department would be in the event the PAC came to a consensus regarding the various aspects of the project (e.g. truck access, funding, etc.).

Attendees were reminded that the role of the PAC is to advise the Department of issues and impacts to the various alternatives. Ultimately, the preferred alternative needs to meet the project's purpose and need.

Will the press will be allowed in future PAC meetings and will the meetings be recorded?

The press will be allowed to observe future PAC meetings. The Department is not opposed to the idea of recording meetings.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m.



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NAME	ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	RECEIVED PAC INVITATION? (Y/N)
Kurt Salmasiraghi	FHWA	622 Hebron Ave Glastonbury, CT	kurt.salmasiraghi@dot.ign	860-494-7561	Y
E. Barnhart	—	WSP + Co 28 Tanager Rd	lall@optonline.net		1
Jennifer Johnson	Coalition for WPT	WPT	jbarryjohnson@gmail.com	917-886-0020	
Robert					
Kristin Hadstylianos	WestCOG	1 Riverside Rd. Sandy Hook, CT	khadstylianos@westog.org		Y
Tina Green		188 Imperial Ave Wilcox Lane Westport CT	tpetermgreen@ahstman.com Cawalah6@optonline.net		N
Cheryl Wash	PtZam				N
Morgan Boyd	WSP Preservation/Summer				Y
Werner Lipert	Bridge St Neighbors 20 Bridge St		wirepolt@optonline.net 203-226-4842		Y
Roberta Keyola	"	"	Bliepolt@optonline.net 203-247-5100		Y





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NAME	ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	RECEIVED PAC INVITATION? (Y/N)
JIM DESTEFANO		192 So Campo	JIM DESTEFANO @gmail.com	203 254 1151	Y
PETER RATKIEWICH	WESTPORT DPW	110 MYRTLE AVE	pratkiewich@westportct.gov	203 341 1125	Y
Douglas Odell		3 Imperial Landings	buddodell@tdmail.com	203 221-0324	
Stephen Edwards	Westport DPW	110 North Ave	Sedwards_e@wpport.ct.gov	203 525-2560	N
Melissa Kane	Sebeethuman;	53 Riverside, Westport	mkane@westportct.gov		Y
Ellie Lowenstein		372 Greens Farms Rd	lelowenstein@gmail.com	203 255-5379	N
Richard Lowenstein	GARNS FARMS ASSOCIATION	" " "	RICKLOWENSTEIN@gmail.com		Y
Ron Corwin	Coalition For West		RON@RONCORWIN.COM	203 557 3541	Y
Foti Koshinas	Westport Police				
Tom DeStefano	resident	192 Campo Rd. S	VERA@deSTRUCTURAL.COM	(203) 270-0199	Y





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NAME	ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	RECEIVED PAC INVITATION? (Y/N)
MARY YOUNT	WESTPORT PZ DEPT		MARYYOUNT ~ WESTPORT CT. GOV	203 341-1078	NO
FRANCIS HENKELS	WESTPORT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION		fhenkels@gmccil.com		YES
DEWEY LOSELE	Downtown PLANNING IMPLEMENTATION		deweylosele@gmail.com		YES
Sam Arcola	Westport Police		sarcola@westport.ct.gov		yes
ANDREW CARABELLA	RTM #4		ACOLABELEGARITMY@gmail.com		
Clayton Hughes		Imperial Lndg	cjhughes9973@gmail.com	203-222-0433	No.
Sarah Connolly	Saugatuck Rowing Club		sconnolly719@gmail.com		Yes
Kwinn	MRF				
Sheroy Jageron	Town	Westport			
Toni Bouchard	STATE SENATOR #26		toni.bouchard@aol.com	203-258-9950	✓





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NAME	ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	RECEIVED PAC INVITATION? (Y/N)
Clairnda Higgins	Westport Shellfish Comm, Chair				Y ✓
Gail Lavielle	State Representative 143rd district	109 Hickory Hill Wilton	gail.lavielle@ cga.ct.gov		?
ROSEAN YOST	WFD	515 P.O.E	ryost@westportct.gov		
Valerie Seiling Jacobs	Save Westport Now	H Compo Pkwy 1 SAXON LANE	valerie.seiling.jacobs@ gmail.com		yes ✓
JOHN SIRMANS			JSIRMANS@OPTONLINE.NET		✓
Robbie Grimond	Bridgbrook MARINA	401 Riverside Ave		203- 852- 4546	✓
Nora Caporale		5 Imperial Landing	noracaporale@gmail.com		
BOB CAPORALE		5 IMPERIAL LANDING	bobcaporale@gmail.com		✓
Jane Montanan	CT TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION	200 Whitney Ave Hamden CT	Jmontanan@ cttrust.org	203 562 6312	✓





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NAME	ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	RECEIVED PAC INVITATION? (Y/N)
Bill Kiedaisch	Boating Advisory Committee	12 Rivard Crescent Westport, CT 06880	Bill Kiedaisch @ gmail.com	203- 857-2238	Y
John Suggs	WPA	64 Center	John Suggs @ gmail.com	203- 233- 2374	Y
Helen GARDEN	WPA	4 River Ln	0artage @ gmail.com	203 207711	Y
Wendy Crautler	WPA	38 E MAIN ST.	WCRAUTLER@ OPTONLINE.NET	203 232- 0425	Y
Don Bergman	-	32 Sherwood Dr	don1bergman @ sbcglobal.net		
D.W. Allen		16 Budget St	teej@ dubya.com		✓
Mike Schroder		575 Riverdale Ave	inst@ asl.com	203 292 6593	
Jennifer Tooker	Selectman	56 Sylvia Rd N	jtooker @ westport.ct.gov		N





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NAME	ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER	RECEIVED PAC INVITATION? (Y/N)
Nancy LW	SAUGATUCK ROWING	RIVERSIDE DR 521 #E			N
PAT TORREAO		82 Riverside			

